

What is claimed is:

Sub
8/1 1. An on-line, interactive web site information system having one or more functions for displaying advertising, information and business listings and referring users such as shoppers or merchants to the web sites of merchants listed with respect to certain geographic locations such as towns and cities, and certain categories, comprising:

means for substantially automated creation of said business listings and advertising by users of said system;

means for substantially automated selection by said merchants of said categories and towns wherein said advertising and listings will appear so as to enable geographic targeting of said users of said system;

means for displaying said advertising, information and business listings for a duration of time;

means for viewing said advertising, information and business listings;

means for linking said advertising, business listings and information to the web pages of others;

at least one hyper-link corresponding to a category to link users to the web site of at least one merchant;

means for building databases from the information provided by users of the system;

means for recording and providing account review information to users of the system;

means for users to add and delete said information, business listings and

advertisements for display on the system;

means for selecting the towns and categories in which to display said advertising,

business listings and information;

extended services means;

means for recording statistics about usage of the System; and,

marketing analysis means for monitoring activity among the various functions of the System.

2. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein said system further

comprises:

means for generating revenue from said usage of said system; and,

accounting means for keeping track of the revenues generated by the System and any commissions owed to others.

3. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein said system further comprises means for substantially automated updating of said business listings, advertising and information.

4. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein said system further includes means for substantially automated, on-line payment for said business listings, information and advertising.

5. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein said system further comprises means for substantially automated display of single day duration coupons.

6. The invention according to Claim 5 wherein said coupons automatically stop being displayed upon the expiration of said time period.

7. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein said system further comprises

means for substantially automated display of single day duration advertising.

8. The invention according to Claim 7 wherein said advertising automatically stops being displayed upon the expiration of said time period.

Sub B2
9. The invention according to Claim 2 wherein said means for generating revenue comprises:

- a. fees from merchants for listing their web sites in specified towns;
- b. fees from banner ads displayed in specified towns;
- c. fees from coupons made available in specified towns;
- d. fees from 4 sale listings displayed in specified towns; and,
- e. fees from extended services.

10. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein said system further comprises providing different levels of passwords to different users of the System

Sub B3
11. The invention according to Claim 5 wherein said 4 sale listings further include means to offer items for sale on a best offer basis.

12. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein said hyper-link comprises an area simulating the appearance of a button that can be selected.

13. The invention according to Claim 12 wherein said hyper-link further appears to be lit up when links to business web pages exist for said category.

14. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein said hyper-link further comprises means for indicating that there are no links to business web pages in a given category.

Sub B4
15. The invention according to Claim 1 wherein said means for indicating that there are no links to business web pages in a given category comprises an area having the

84 appearance of a darkened button.

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